

**FY2014 WALDO COUNTY BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING AND
FINAL BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
DECEMBER 6, 2013**

Present: Commissioners William D. Shorey, Amy R. Fowler and Betty I. Johnson. Budget Committee Members Bill Sneed, James Bennett, Richard Desmarais, Thomas Flacke, Clement Blakney, Harry Dean Potter, Peter Curley and Fred Rollins. Also present to take minutes were Deputy County Clerk Linda Kinney and County Clerk Barbara Arseneau.

Meeting opened by Chairman Bill Sneed at 6:00 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Present was Katharine Littlefield, Waldo Selectman.

K. Littlefield: Is this the total budget or will there be additions on the Reserves or any subtractions from Surplus to reduce the tax levy? Can we look at this and see the exact total or is this total going to change?

B. Sneed: It may change because we didn't have a presentation from the folks at Time & Tide RC & D. We have to give them a fair chance to ask for the money that they requested.

K. Littlefield: There are going to be no Reserves after the fact? Is there going to be any portion of any surplus dedicated to reduce the tax levy?

W. Shorey: Not this year. It is all in there. We put a couple hundred thousand dollars in the Reserves from Undesignated Funds that will show up at the end of the year. It is mainly in Employment Security - \$50,000.00, Severance - \$50,000.00, and Facilities, All Other and Courthouses - \$50,000.00 each. The Reserves will come up to about \$805,000.00 at the end of the year.

K. Littlefield: What do you have for a balance forward or an undesignated surplus balance?

W. Shorey: \$800,000.00 to \$850,000.00 after we have taken out the money for the accounts mentioned before.

K. Littlefield: No portion of that is going to reduce the taxes?

W. Shorey: We are carrying that because we are looking ahead at the possibility of a need to replace a boiler at Superior Court. It is about 30 – 40 years old and costs about \$300,000.00 to replace it. We ordinarily would want to be around \$500,000.00 to \$700,000.00 to protect the County.

K. Littlefield: The budget seems to be down, which is great and kudos to everybody if it is. If a budget is already inflated by \$100,000.00 and then is reduced, it's really not a great job, so I just hope that all of you took a really close look at all the lines on this budget. It's getting really tough out in the municipalities. Our County tax has gone from \$79,000.00 to \$90,000.00. That may not seem like much to the rest of you, but we are a small town and have very little.

B. Sneed: You know that the County's tax to the towns is based on the State valuations. The County could reduce this budget to zero and you would still be paying tax.

K. Littlefield: For every one of those years, my town's valuation went down.

W. Shorey: Kathy, one thing that speaks well for this budget is the fact that it is about \$196,000.00 under the L.D. 1 Cap, leaving a lot of money on the table. I think we are being pretty honest with the taxpayers. This is a very lean budget and we think it is excellent. It is similar to the budget of 2009, as Bill Sneed noted at the last meeting.

K. Littlefield: Thank you very much.

B. Sneed: Anyone else from the public? (None) Would any County employee wish to put their oar in the water?

1080-4718 Advertising & Promotion - Time & Tide RC & D:

Present for Time & Tide RC & D was Meghan LaChapelle.

M. LaChapelle: I am the Project Planner recently hired for Time & Tide Resource Conservation & Development. What we are asking for is \$3,750.00. It is an increase of 1% from last year because we are increasing activities. In addition to hiring me in April of this past year, we are increasing activities in all of the counties – Waldo specifically. We will be launching a newly designed web site the first of next year. We are bringing ourselves from where we were in 2010 when we had a Federal separation into 2013. My personal goal is to do at least one project in every town in the County each year. Our council member, Vance Wells, is currently working on a project that he hopes to get launched after the first of the year in the Swanville area. It is similar to Commissioner Shorey's County Garden Project because so much of the food that was being generated was going to the community of Swanville. He wants to do something to help support them and give them greater pride. We are fully supporting him. Can I answer any questions?

B. Sneed: Commissioner Shorey, any thoughts?

W. Shorey: I talked with Vance and it's a difficult project that he is working on. I told him I'd help as much as I could. The big thing is to get a sponsor. The concept of the project is to have people that are asking for town assistance come in to do the garden

work themselves. It is a project that has to start small and then see if it can keep itself going.

B. Sneed: Any thoughts by the Budget Committee? James [Bennett]?

J. Bennett: I want to make a number of changes on this whole thing, so maybe we should talk about it later.

I looked this entire 1080 budget over and read a letter that I hadn't seen before. Mid-Coast Economic Development wants \$2,000.00 and most of that is for Bath and Brunswick. I don't think that we should be sending our money there. Also, Belfast Creative Coalition, we don't need to send money to them either.

B. Sneed: Clem? Dean?

C. Blakney: I think we should do something for Time & Tide. It wasn't well presented last year and was much more articulated this year. I think we should give due credit to that and at least give them something as opposed to what we did not do last year.

B. Sneed: Jim asked for changes on individual agencies so we will have to go over them one at a time.

1080-4715 – Waldo Community Action Partners

****J. Bennett moved, R. Desmaris seconded to approve the requested amount of \$3,500.00. Unanimous.**

1080-4716 – Eastern Maine Development Corporation

****J. Bennett moved, B. Sneed seconded to reduce the requested amount to zero. Motion passed. H. Potter opposed.**

Discussion:

B. Johnson: I sit on the board for MCEDD. We are very active and even though we cover only Waldo County towns, it's a shame to shut down any economic development. It's the towns that will benefit. Belfast seems to get a lot of development, but some of these other towns do not. I think it behooves us to approve funding.

1080-4718 - Time & Tide RC & D

****J. Bennett moved to reduce the requested amount to zero. Motion died for lack of second.**

****R. Desmaris moved, P. Curley seconded to fund in the amount of \$1,000.00. Motion passed. J. Bennett opposed.**

1080-4719 – Waldo County Firefighters Association

****J. Bennett moved, P. Curley seconded to approve the requested amount of \$5,000.00. Unanimous.**

1080 – 4720 – Midcoast Economic Development

****J. Bennett moved, F. Rollins seconded to reduce the requested amount to zero. Motion passed. B. Sneed opposed.**

1080 – 4721 – Belfast Creative Coalition

****J. Bennett moved, P. Curley seconded to reduce the requested amount to zero.**

Discussion:

W. Shorey: I listened to this presentation several times and this lady has something truly helpful to small farms in Waldo County. The mapping is very important. When we cut \$1,000.00 it just reduces recognition away from the small farmers trying to make a living in Waldo County.

J. Bennett: I had a glance at that map and there are all kinds of farms that are not on there. I think if you are going to make a map you should include all farms. I think they could do a far better job. I still think we should not fund this.

B. Sneed: Is it fair to say that this is their first year?

W. Shorey: Yes, it is fair to say that this is their first year and they are making an attempt to do something constructive.

C. Blakney: I think we have a learning curve here and they deserve a second chance to try to get more farms recognized.

J. Bennett: They can do that and get it back to us another time. I don't think you can just give money to people walking through the door. The money is just not there. There is just too much unpaid tax and it is getting worse.

A. Fowler: I agree and hear you. I see this is the first year for Belfast Creative Coalition and know that it sounds a bit artsy, if you will. This is a really good example of economic stimulation. There's a lot not on the map but there's a lot that is on the map that is really good. If it gets people out into the countryside I think it is a plus.

C. Blakney: We've taken money from other line items. I think it's good to put it toward where it might have greatest gain.

B. Sneed: Is there any further discussion on line 4721? There has been a motion made and seconded to fund at zero dollars. Can we get a vote?

****Motion defeated with only two in favor.**

****B. Sneed moved, P. Curley seconded to approve funding in the amount of \$1,000.00. Motion passed. J. Bennett and F. Rollins opposed.**

****B. Sneed moved, C. Blakney seconded to approve the funding of Department 1080 – Advertising & Promotion in the amount of \$10,500.00. Motion passed. J. Bennett opposed.**

1010 – Emergency Management Agency

**** B. Sneed moved, J. Bennett seconded to approve the requested amount of \$107,395.00. Unanimous.**

1015 – District Attorney

****B. Sneed moved, F. Rollins seconded to approve the requested amount of \$237,177.00. Unanimous.**

1020 – Commissioners

****B. Sneed moved, J. Bennett seconded to approve the requested amount of \$503,542.00. Unanimous.**

1025 - Treasurer

****B. Sneed moved, R. Desmaris seconded to approve the requested amount of \$71,290.00.**

Discussion:

J. Bennett: I want to know why we would fund them for more than they asked for.

D. Parkman: Former Commissioner Berry had set a pay scale for the Deputy Treasurer with a cost of living increase every year. The Commissioners added \$2,500.00 for that position on top of that and I agree with that decision.

****Motion passed. Unanimous.**

1030 - Facilities

B. Sneed moved, J. Bennett seconded to approve the requested amount of \$270,723.00. Unanimous.

1065 - Registry of Deeds

****R. Desmaris moved, B. Sneed seconded to approve the requested amount of \$224,356.00. Unanimous.**

1070 – Registry of Probate

****R. Desmaris moved, J. Bennett seconded to approve the requested amount of \$208,647.00. Unanimous.**

1075 - Sheriff

****B. Sneed moved, J. Bennett seconded to approve the requested amount of \$1,330,236.00.**

Discussion:

W. Shorey: I spoke up at the last meeting that the price of gasoline was dropping. It hasn't continued dropping – oil is rising and so is gas. It is not going to happen. Many experts beyond me thought the same thing. I would like to suggest that it is prudent to add the \$6,400.00 back in.

B. Sneed: This is the Sheriff's budget, and would be Line 4210 – Vehicle Fuel. The original request was for \$96,000.00 and at the last meeting, we dropped it to \$89,600.00.

W. Shorey: I had recommended it, but it's a mistake, it isn't going to happen and fuel is going to be very expensive. The Sheriff will need every gallon he can get. Look at FOX news tomorrow and you'll see why I'm saying that.

F. Rollins: Are you reflecting this across the board with all departments?

W. Shorey: This is the only department that uses an extraordinary amount of gas.

R. Desmaris: Are we locked-in on oil?

K. Nealley: Yes, we are locked-in at \$3.25 per gallon until May.

W. Shorey: May has been historically the best month to buy oil. We will try again this coming year.

****B. Sneed moved, H. Potter seconded to increase the fuel amount by \$6,400.00 to \$96,000.00, bringing the Contractual Services bottom line to \$161,100.00. Motion passed. T. Flacke opposed.**

****B. Sneed moved, R. Desmaris seconded approve the total as originally presented at \$1,336,636.00. Motion passed. T. Flacke opposed.**

1076 – Communications

****B. Sneed moved, C. Blakney seconded to approve the requested amount of \$867,697.00.**

Discussion:

J. Bennett: That is a \$26,800.00 increase and I would like to amend that amount and cut \$20,000.00, bringing the bottom line to \$847,697.00.

****Motion died for lack of second.**

****B. Sneed moved, P. Curley seconded to approve the requested amount of \$867,697.00. Motion passed with J. Bennett opposed.**

1090 - Audit

****J. Bennett moved, B. Sneed seconded to approve the requested amount of \$9,500.00. Unanimous.**

1095 – Debt Service

No funding requested.

2000 – Tax Anticipation Note

****R. Desmaris moved, P. Curley seconded to approve the requested amount of \$12,000.00. Unanimous.**

2005 -Waldo County Extension:

****B. Sneed moved, J. Bennett seconded to approve the requested amount of \$40,825.00. Unanimous.**

2025 – Employee Benefits

****J. Bennett moved, R. Desmaris seconded to approve the requested amount of \$1,236,550. Unanimous.**

2035 – Waldo County Soil & Water Conservation District

****J. Bennett moved, B. Sneed seconded to approve the requested amount of \$25,000.00. Unanimous.**

2040 – Records Preservation

No funding requested.

2045 - Reserves

No funding requested.

1050 - Corrections

****B. Sneed moved, R. Desmaris seconded to approve the requested budget amount of \$2,832,353.00. Unanimous.**

FY 2014 Budget Total

****B. Sneed moved, H. Potter seconded to approve the total County budget in the amount of \$5,161,838.00 and the total budget, including Corrections in the amount of \$7,994,191.00. Unanimous.**

****B. Sneed moved, J. Bennett seconded to adjourn at 6:42 p.m. Unanimous.**

L.D. 1 Tax Cap Meeting

****Not needed. The budget is below CAP.**

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to enter Executive Session for Consideration of Real Property as permitted by M.R.S.A. Title 1 § 405 (6)(C) at 6:45 p.m. Unanimous.**

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to come out of Executive Session at 7:11 p.m. Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted by:


Deputy County Clerk